Iron County Register

BY ELI D. AKE.

IRONTON, - - - MISSOURI

AN INCOMPLETE REVELATION.

While Quaker folks were Quakers still, some fifty years ago,
When coats were drab and gowns were plain and speech was staid and slow,
Before Dame Fashion dared suggest a single friz or curl,
There dwelt, 'mid Penfield's peaceful shades, an old-time Quaker girl.

Ruth Wilson's garb was of her sect. Devoid of furbelows,
She spoke rebuke to vanity, from bonnet to her toes:
Sweet red bird was she, all disguised in feathers of dove,
With dainty foot and perfect form and eyes that dreamt of love.

Sylvanus Moore, a bachelor of forty years or so,
A quaintly pious, weazened soul, with beard and hair of tow,
And queer thin legs and shuffling walk and drawling, nasal tone,
Was prompted by the Spirit to make this maid his own.

He knew it was the Spirit, for he felt it in his breast
As oft before in meeting time, and, sure of his request,
Procured the permit in due form. On Fourth-day of that week
He let Ruth know the message true that he was moved to speak.

"Ruth, it has been revealed to me that thee and I shall wed,
I have spoken to the meeting and the members all have said
That our union seems a righteous one, which they will not gainsay.
So, if convenient to thy views, I'll wed thee next Third-day."

The cool possession of herself by friend Sylvanus Moore
Aroused her hot resentment, which by effort she forbore,
(She knew he was a goodly man, of simple, childlish mind)
And checked the word "Impertinence!" and answered him in kind:

"Sylvanus Moore, do thee go home and wait until I see
The fact that I must be thy wife revealed unto *me*."
And thus she left him there alone, at will to ruminate,
Sore puzzled at the mysteries of Love, Free Will, and Fate.

Richard A. Jackson, in Century.

THE EAST WING.

I here relate the story of a dream and its effect. The cause will probably be accounted for in years to come, when dreams will be considered a rational subject of conversation. It may be read with interest by those who frequented San Francisco society in early days, as the actors were movers in the little circle that then existed.

The house in which the events took place stands on the north side of Clay Street Hill. Since I lived there (ten years ago) the place has been remodeled; but in those days it was a dreary looking edifice, and the street was cut through to only a block beyond, and was unpaved, which made it very rock, and rough looking for a place which was considered quite fine for those days. Moreover, the house had been standing there fifteen years when I went into it, making it seem quite like an old family residence. So no one thought it at all strange that there should be both a ghost and a history connected with it.

As I said before, after I left the whole place was remodeled, and, I should have added, particularly the east wing. This part of the house once had windows, and was entirely covered with running vines, and almost hidden by the broad spreading branches of an old tree—a tree you would expect to see in a graveyard, sheltering a tomb, but certainly not in the garden of a family residence. And, indeed, it used to seem to me as if the eccentric person who lived there had chosen to attach to his home the last resting place of the family bones.

To me, at least, who knows the history of the place, and had even been one of the actors who have given the neighborhood a dark reputation, this corner of the house is a tomb, and can never be made to look like anything else.

Before going further I must state some uninteresting events in my own life, the most painful of which was the sudden and mysterious disappearance of my mother before I was yet two years old. My father's life seemed ruined by this loss, and, regardless of the fact that his only child would be left alone if he did not try to live for her, he seemed willing to die, and I can only remember him as an invalid for whom I felt some awe and a great deal of respect, and whom never for a moment, even after his death, could I possibly disobey.

The house in which I lived was some distance over the sand hills from the one of which I write; but from my nursery window I could see distinctly the old Clay Street barn—as I then delighted to call it. And when I became weary of watching the bay, or the ships sailing through the Golden Gate, or the fog, which, to my imaginative mind, seemed like some huge *genie* that would at last take me up and along with it, I would turn my eyes to the old house on the hill, and weave strange stories to myself about the dark corners and weird rooms which I felt sure formed its interior.

Its owner, John Finger, was a weekly visitor at our home, and was, with the exception of Briggs, my father's lawyer and my subsequent guardian, the only person who ever sat at table with us in my father's house. From childhood I felt an instinctive fear of this person, and, much to my father's disgust, I always insisted upon running away whenever he appeared.

I can remember yet the awful thoughts that used to come to me whenever, while standing at my window hugging my doll, I would see him come out and shut the door behind him. It was the particular manner in which he did this that frightened me, for it always seemed to me that something or some one held it on the inside, for he would frequently reopen it and shut it again, as if he were angry. But perhaps the door was heavy or I fanciful, but I always held my doll a little closer, and would whisper:

"I'd rather be carried off by the fog than be shut up in that house—wouldn't you, dear?"

As I became older, the fear actually grew upon me that some time, in some inexplicable manner, I should wake up and find myself shut in behind that heavy door, and, at last, when my father died and left in his will the wish that I should marry Mr. Finger, it seemed quite natural to think of him as my husband, though the idea was horrible as ever.

On my seventeenth birthday, my guardian came to me, and said:

"Alice, my child, it is quite time for you to begin to think of your marriage. Shall we set the fifteenth of November for the wedding day?"

I said "yes" in my usual quiet way, and then was again alone with my thoughts and fears. As the day drew near I became more reconciled, perhaps owing to the fact that, being a woman, I could not feel indifferent toward an event which would bring me so many new dresses and bonnets; and our old home really seemed quite gay, with all its furniture draped in bright colored articles of clothing, which were thrown upon any convenient chair and table during the exciting hours of packing.

Still, when the morning actually arrived, I awoke, feeling very solemn and very lonely, and was more glad than sorry to hear the rain falling upon the leaves of a tree near my window. I arose, and after a breakfast which I was too frightened to eat, I went with Briggs and a servant to church, where I met and married John Finger. And the only part of the service I remember, and which will always seem to me a portion of the marriage ceremony, is the sound of the raindrops, as they fell through a hole in the roof, down to a pool already formed on the floor.

Something in the splash of those raindrops made me feel very much like crying, and when my guardian took my hand and congratulated me, I looked up and tried to smile, and the sun tried for a moment to break through a cloud, but the smile and the sunbeam died together.

Soon after, we arrived at our now common home, and were met at the door by the housekeeper, a grim-looking female, who had evidently entered the house on its natal day, and had no intention of ever leaving it again alive.

Unintentionally, I at once made her my eternal enemy by passing her without a greeting. I saw a peculiar glance pass between the two, however, so I was prepared to use some policy and smile as sweetly as I could when my husband introduced me to her some few minutes after.

One look about the hallway was sufficient to allow me to take in every point; the stairway turning to the east from the lower end; the statue at the foot of it that held a light in its right hand, which it tried to shade with its left; a door at the very lower end seemed to open into a library; and round to the west of the entrance way was a door which I supposed opened into the parlor; but on the wall of the east side there was no door, and, while looking at this place, I said, in a surprised manner:

"Why, how strange!"

"What is so strange?" said Frau Stabbe, with a sinister look in her eye.

"Why," faltered I, "I think it very strange that there is no door in this wall, knowing as I do that there must be a room there."

"Well, it's my opinion that the less you pry into things in this house the better you'll please the man you've married," and with many an ominous muttering the old creature limped out to some part of the house unknown to me then.

I looked inquiringly at my husband, but he had evidently been so occupied in hanging up his coat and in smoothing down his oily hair that he had heard nothing of the strange conversation.

That night, you may well fancy, was a sleepless one. The wall without a door haunted and terrified me, and before morning I was as nervous regarding this wing on the east side of the house as was the wife of Bluebeard about the forbidden key.

At daybreak I arose, and, dressing myself in a soft, bright-colored wrapper, went down stairs and opened the front door. It was not yet seven o'clock—cold, dark and wet; but my curiosity was forcing me almost against my common sense; and I held my skirts up high above the wet steps, and picked my way round the muddy pathway to where I could see the outside wall of the wing. I stood on tiptoe and pulled the vines aside from several places, but could see no door, nor any windows; and I went shivering into the house more mystified than ever.

Opening the door into the parlor I went in and found a long, dreary-looking room, furnished in black hair cloth. Between the two front windows was an old-fashioned pier glass, in which I saw myself at full length. For the first time in my life I did not care to look at myself. My face was too long and colorless to please me, and my eyes had dark rings under them which I did not like; but my soft cashmere dress, which fell in loose folds on the floor, pleased me, and I turned and walked down the room, looking back over my shoulder, pleased as a child to see my train sweep the floor behind me.

But, alas! while smiling at myself, and not observing my footsteps, I stumbled over a hassock, and fell from my high dignity in a heap on the floor.

I looked up from my humble position just in time to see John Finger, his thin lips set in a scornful smile. My youth and spirits seemed suddenly to die within me.

When I had once more come to my senses and regained my dignity, I went out into the hall and followed my husband to breakfast.

A weary, weary meal was partaken of, seasoned with no word, no smile, and when, soon after, he put on his overcoat and hat and went out of the door, I trembled, and felt my old fear return, and realized that my forebodings had come true—I was on the "other side" of that heavy door with not even my inanimate friend of other days to comfort me.

Finding myself alone, I instinctively turned to the wall that seemed to have entered into my life so strangely. I do not know why I did it, nor why I was disappointed at the silence which greeted the act, but I placed my ear close to the partition, wondering what I should hear.

Perhaps I am dwelling too long upon the small particulars concerning my subject, but I wish to impress any one who may chance to read this with the mystery of this wall as deeply as I was impressed myself, as that is the only way I have of making you sympathize with me in my dream concerning it.

Lonely, with nothing to do, I determined to look about the house. I had from childhood filled it with romances in imagination, but how unromantic I found it all. A lumber room full of old and uninteresting furniture, all placed about in a stiff and uncomfortable manner, the bed in its particular corner, the one which in every room originally intended for sleeping purposes suggests the bed. The bureau, of course, stood between the windows. The architect, when he planned the house had evidently said, as he worked, "I must leave space here for a bureau, there for a washstand, some chairs might be placed here, and one particularly large one over there." And so had the whole arrangement of the house been carried out from end to end.

I went dolefully down under the shadow of the statue in the hall, and cried my lonesome little self to sleep.

I did not wake until I heard my husband at the door; then I jumped up, and once more felt the curl of his under lip to my very marrow, and knew instantly that for the second time in the first day of my married life I had proved myself in his eyes unworthy the dignity of my position.

At last another meal time arrived, and I went to the table spiritless and disheartened. Every one thinks his trouble the greatest on earth; and, indeed, why should he not, since he is the sufferer? And so I thought that there could be no position more dreary and pitiful than mine. The very thought of my situation humiliated me. Why had I so meekly submitted to this wish of my dead parent? Why had this man, whose nature seemed actually slimy with this stagnation, wished to have so young and inexperienced a creature as I to share his dreariness? And why—why—why was there no door opening into that ghostly wing? Finally the thought came to me that possibly I might be misjudging this man whose wife I was. Why not talk to him and smile, in spite of his solemn countenance, which seemed to forbid any levity? Why not talk about the wing and laugh at my fears, and see what he would say? Emboldened by my free thoughts, I said, without looking at him:

"John"—the name almost turned my gorge—"why do you not put a door from the front hallway into the east wing and make a cozy little sitting room of it for me to sit in?"

We both looked up from our plates at once, and he said, cruelly, and with a smile which was hideous:

"I consider thirteen rooms and a stairway sufficient for a child to play in."

"Heavens! thought I, "where did my awful audacity spring from?" But the mystery seemed to increase, and I went to bed that night with the whole weight upon my young mind of the wing, the wall, my husband's smile, and my own lonely situation. And when I slept I dreamed, and my dream changed the whole course of my life.

I seemed to have been out, alone, in my carriage, and had just returned at midnight, finding the usually dark house full of light, the source of which I could not see.

Pleased and wondrously happy was I at the sight, and, almost laughing aloud, I actually jumped, like a school girl, up the steps and into the hallway. One becomes wonderfully well bred under the influence of a dream, so I felt not the slightest surprise to find the east wing opened, beautifully furnished, and its atmosphere almost suffocating with perfume and the warmth from its dazzling light. I stood entranced, and felt my soul growing under the influence of the grace and beauty which lay before it. The floor was tiled with Pompeiian designs; Persian rugs, whose colors were so bright and mingled so closely as to dazzle my sight; soft lace and softer satin fell over long, low windows in a mass to the floor. The walls were painted to represent a blue sea in the distance, seen from a veranda, from the roof of which hung long vines that, in fancy, I could see swaying in the breeze. Soft ottomans, oriental divans, and gilded chairs seemed absolutely to grow out of the beauty that surrounded them, so naturally were they placed in their different nooks and corners. The only article of furniture which seemed foreign to the scene was a piano; but this was so richly covered and so artfully curtained into a small ante-room that it looked more piquante than grotesque to my charmed eye.

A step farther, and I discovered that the room was occupied. A man was seated at the instrument. His left elbow rested on the music rack before him; his temple leaned heavily against the knuckles of his clenched hand, with his right hand he was striking chords, which even at this distant day sound to me harsh and discordant; and, as they grated upon my ears, I thought, "Those chords spring from a soul that can find no peace on earth."

Half hidden by the heavy folds of the curtains, I could see a woman, whose white hand was thrown behind her, grasping the curtain in a manner which told me every nerve was at work in controlling her.

I did not stop to wonder who these two might be. I did not need to, for, as we say, when we feel a cool touch upon the cheek, "that is the breeze," so I said: "This is my mother and my husband, as they stood on the night of her disappearance, fifteen years ago;" and I longed to throw my arms about her, and call her "mother." Not that I loved her, or realized for a moment what a warm, tender creature a mother can be, for I had been brought up without one, and did not know how to miss the love and care; but I wanted to see how it would seem to say the word, and feel soft, loving eyes turn upon me with pride and joy.

I tried to go to her, but I seemed powerless to move; the atmosphere about me seemed to be charmed; and I was forced to stand where I was and listen, for they were talking. The old, sarcastic voice of my husband was bringing to my ears these words: "Either you leave this house alone with me to-night, or you leave it never."

"What are you saying?" said my mother, calmly. "Would you let this useless passion of yours ruin my home, my life, and the future of my infant child?"

"I care not for your home, nor for your child's future! You belong to me, and this child would never have been had you been true to me. Because you thought me dead, you imagined yourself free from your promise to me, and falsely accepted the proposals of another man, leaving my life the dreary blank it must become. The memory of my past seems cursed, and my future seems like a desert in the night. This room, which I furnished with so much beauty, because I thought you might some time use it, has become but a tomb for my hopes, and now to see you standing here, yet not belonging here, I want to strangle you, and curse the day you were born. I owe you no mercy. Once I loved you tenderly, now I hate you fiercely, and this child of another's is but a toad in my pathway, which I will either kill or torture!"

The hand that held the curtain seemed to hold all the nerves of the body in its grasp, so firm and still it was, and the voice which answered this devil's speech was as unmoved and strong as the hand:

"And what, then, do you propose to do, since I again refuse to leave all and follow you?"

Her bearing and calmness seemed to madden him, for with a gleam in his eye with which I felt familiar, he sprang from his seat like a leopard from its hiding place, and said, in a husky voice which its master had no longer any control over:

"This—and this—and this," and the strong young life was dashed out of the proud form that had stood so fearlessly there but a moment before. He pulled the curtain over the dead body, stepped over it, and strode out of the room.

For a while all was dark; then again I found myself in the wing; but years had passed by, and all around me was in ruins. I walked to the piano and seated myself before it; instinctively I placed my elbow on the music rack and my head on my hand. My right hand raised itself to strike the keys; then for the first time I noticed how fruitless would be the act, since long ago all power of sound must have left the rusty case. I again looked around the room. The curtains, the rugs, the cushions, were falling to pieces, the frescoes on walls and ceilings were moldy and stained with damp and mildew. Dust was deep on everything, and in despair I struck with my hand the dead keys before me. To my horror the same chord arose from under my touch which I had heard before. I arose to leave the horrible place, when out of the resting folds of satin came a form holding its left hand to its throat. I tried to escape, but was held down by some unseen force, and the hand was slowly taken away from the throat, leaving exposed to my unwilling eyes an ugly, discolored bruise.

I covered my face, but felt the ghostly hand pointing at me, and then I heard my mother's voice say:

"My child, avenge my death!"

I could bear no more, but fled, without well knowing the direction I took. But I could find no door. I grasped wildly at the hangings by the windows, but they fell at my touch. I felt over every spot on the walls that I could reach, yet found no outlet. All was dark about me. There seemed no place where a glint of light could possibly strike through. In an agony of fright bordering upon madness I raised the rug upon the floor, and there, like a friend with open arms to receive me, was a pit that seemed to have no bottom. With a maniacal shriek I leaped into this grave, that closed upon me like a wave, and I seemed to fall forever.

This shriek I had given in reality, and by it had awakened my husband, who shook me violently and said:

"Wake up! You're dreaming."

"Dreaming," sobbed I, "and the wing, the ghost, the grave—that horrible grave into which I fell. Oh——"

But more frightful than all I had seen in my dream was the face of my husband at that moment. He stood beside the bed in the moonlight; his face was livid, his hands clenched spasmodically. I hid my face in the pillow, but he was leaning toward me and hissing into my ears the horrible words:

"Hark you, my lady. Another word of this devilish wing, and the ghosts and the graves that your head is addled with, and I'll choke the life out of you, as I did"—— But here he caught himself with an oath, and, snatching up a dressing gown from a chair near by, he left the room.

Next day, in imagination, I occupied the room of my dreams. I could not escape from it, and soon I learned to dread the nights that brought me dreams, and the days that were filled with the shadows of the nights. I became so weak and ill that I begged my husband to take me away, and he, having business in the mountains, and not wishing to leave me alone too long to pry into his secrets, took me with him. Change of scene and faces soon restored me to health, and I was not sorry to return to the place I was obliged to call home, when it was time to go.

But when we had returned I again became influenced by the uncanny air which surrounded the house, and with the first night, returned my maddening dream.

Before morning I had come to a firm decision, which I started to carry out as soon as I was left alone that day.

At nine o'clock I called the carpenter, and told him to go to work at once, and make a door in that wall.

"Get some men to help you," I said, "for I want the opening made before three o'clock."

When he had gone for his tools and men, I became giddy with nervousness, and when, shortly after I heard the blows on the wall, I fainted.

After some hours I was again myself, and fearing another attack of nervousness, I sent a note by the gardener to Briggs, my guardian, telling him to come to me at once, as I needed him. In the early morning I had taken the precaution to send Frau Stabbe on a visit to her cousin in Oakland, so I did not have her to fear.

It seemed hours before my much-needed friend arrived, yet it was in reality but a few moments. I sobbed aloud when I saw him, but managed, between tears and a ludicrous attempt to keep from laughing, to tell him my dream, its effect upon me, and my rash act of breaking into the wing to satisfy my curiosity. My guardian took my hot hands in his cool palms, and said:

"My poor child, this owl's nest and the owl have worried you into a fever. I am going to send for a physician and send you to bed. I am also going to remain here till Mr. Finger returns, so I may shield you from any anger he may feel or express; the work shall go on, and your curiosity shall be gratified."

The doctor was sent for, and when he came, I was ordered to bed. I meekly went, but I felt that no power on earth would keep me there long.

I took, before getting into bed, a draught the doctor left for me, and before many minutes I was fast asleep.

For six weeks I raved with fever, during which time, they told me afterward, I talked of my mother, my husband, some strange room, and a chord of music that invariably made me shiver and try to bury my head in the pillow.

When I was able to speak rationally and have my questions answered I asked my faithful friend Briggs to tell me what had happened and how long I had been ill. He then said:

"I can tell you but little now, and you must not get excited nor ask any questions. We found the room in the wing as you described it to me; we also found the grave under the floor, and a coffin which we have not yet opened. How the grave was dug, the coffin purchased and brought into the house, and the wall built without attracting attention, or leaking out, is a mystery, and must have taken a fortune to keep down. Frau Stabbe was certainly an accomplice, for upon her return from Oakland, at four o'clock on the day you were taken ill, she saw the work going on in the wing, and, not waiting to ask any questions, she turned and hurried away. Probably she went to Mr. Finger's office and told him of his danger, for neither of them have been seen or heard of since. Possibly, my child, we have discovered the mystery connected with the disappearance of your mother." And Briggs left the room.

I sank down into my pillows exhausted, but happy, and my one thought was: "Free—free from him and from it! Would to Heaven I might blot my experience of married life from my memory forever!"

In a week, during which time Briggs visited me and consoled me every day, I secretly decided to visit the wing which had been a black shadow over my life for so many months. When I reached the foot of the stairs and saw the debris in the hall I felt faint, but controlled myself and hurried on.

I reached the opening, which was still in the rough as the workmen had left it, and, taking a long breath as though for a plunge in the sea, I went in. How frightfully familiar it was! How still! How awful! I went to the piano and seated myself before it. I dared not touch the keys—I feared they would rattle like the bones in "Danse Macabre" if I did, and without realizing what I did, I leaned my elbow on the music rack before me, with my head upon my hand. A current of air from the opening in the wall stirred the curtains around me. I started to my feet, and as I did so my right hand dropped heavily upon the keys. Once more the horrible discord fell upon my ears. Thoroughly unnerved and ill as I was, this last was more than I could bear, and, shrieking with terror, I ran straight into the folds of the curtain which had once covered my husband's victim, and fell there senseless.

They found me there hours after, and I was taken, ill as I was, from the house, into which I have never since returned.

Even now—ten years after—as I write I look around me into the shadowy corners of my little sitting room, and shudder at the memory of those horrible days.

John Finger and his accomplice have never been heard of since their guilty flight, and though they will probably never be found and given the punishment the law is reserving for them, I am satisfied, and feel that through much suffering my mother's death has been avenged.

And this is my dream, and what came from it. And who can say it came to naught, since it cleared a long-silenced mystery and caused the guilty to flee.—*Argonaut.*

Sheep Devourers.

The sheep-farmers of New Zealand are in a painful state of mind in regard to the kea, through the wickedness of which sheep-farming is in process of destruction. The kea is a native parrot, sometimes as profane and vicious as any civilized parrot. He has acquired a taste for mutton, and refuses to eat anything else. Whenever a flock of keas discover a flock of sheep, they fall upon the latter, loudly shrieking, "Polly wants some mutton," and, perching on the backs of the unhappy sheep, tear them to pieces.

The aggrieved sheep-farmers are now in search of some animal that will extirpate the keas. No animal at present residing in New Zealand is willing to undertake the task, the local cats especially being of the opinion that the kea is too large to be considered a game bird. Whether larger and bolder cats can be found is very doubtful. In all probability no animal will enter into any contract to extirpate the keas, who will prey upon the sheep to their heart's content.

What the sheep-farmers need to do is to teach the sheep to protect themselves. This could be accomplished in various ways. The sheep could rid themselves of the keas by rolling on the ground; or they could accomplish the same result by plastering themselves thickly with mud. A few intelligent pigs should be placed in every flock of sheep, so that the latter, observing the way in which pigs plaster themselves with mud could follow their example, and thereby secure immunity from the keas. Or the shepherds themselves might teach the sheep by precept and example to roll on the grass whenever molested by keas. Surely, if a graminivorous parrot can teach itself to kill and eat mutton, sheep can be taught the simple measures necessary to their safety.—*N Y. Times.*

—It is now held by scientific men that a dead branch exhausts the vitality of the tree as much as though alive. The dead canes on raspberry bushes would appear to affect them in like manner. Bushes not cleared of old canes produce small, defective, crumbling specimens.

A MILLION DOLLAR BLAZE.

Total Destruction by Fire of the Pittsburgh Exposition Buildings—A Million Dollar's Worth of Property Consumed—Much of the Loss of Treasured Relics Irreparable.

PITTSBURGH, PA., Oct. 3.

The magnificent buildings of the Pittsburgh, Exposition Society on the north bank of the Allegheny River have been totally destroyed by fire. The immense ttructures, with their almost endless variety of exhibits, illustrative of every branch of art, science and mechanical skill, which were yesterday visited by thousands of people, and since the opening on September 6 by hundreds of thousands, is now a mass of splintered and powdered embers and curled and tangled iron. The destruction is complete, and nothing but the site remains of the home of the specimens of brain and brawn in which Pittsburghers felt so much pride. The fire was first discovered at two o'clock this morning in the boiler-room attached to the machinery hall at the south end of the building, and before the watchman could give an alarm the flames had spread to the floral hall, machinery hall and the main building, and in less than ten minutes the buildings were on fire from end to end.

When the Fire Department arrived on the grounds the flames were beyond control. The firemen turned their attention to saving the adjacent property, many residences on South avenue being in flames. By hard work, however, they succeeded in saving all those, with no more damage done than the burning of fences and cornices. The alarms soon aroused almost the entire population of two cities, and it is estimated that not less than from 75,000 to 100,000 people witnessed the conflagration. The reflection of the flames illuminated the country for miles around, making possible the reading of the finest newspaper print. In one hour from the discovery of the fire a mere attenuated skeleton of the once magnificient structure was all that was left. Nothing was saved. Numerous theories as to the origin of the fire have been advanced, but so far most of them have fallen to the ground. It is known to have started in the boiler house, and may have been caused by a spark from the furnace or the accidental ignition of some contiguous substance from a gas jet left burning in the boiler house. The loss will probably reach $1,000,000. Secretary Patterson places the value of the building destroyed at $150,000, the insurance $40,000. The exhibitors will sustain a loss of about $800,000.

An irreparable loss, however, was occasioned by the destruction of the relic department. The cash value of the articles contained therein did not exceed $10,000, but many can not be replaced. In the annex was Arabian, the first locomotive ever run in the United States. It was also destroyed, and the Great Western Band case with a full set of splendid instruments. In the safe were $6,000 cash receipts from yesterday's admissions and Levy's gold cornet. The attendance at the Exposition yesterday was the largest of any day in its history. Admissions day and evening were 27,000, and the crowd last night was so great that the building was packed to its utmost capacity. The buildings which were destroyed were erected in 1875. The main building was 600 feet long and 150 feet wide. Machinery Hall was 400 feet long and 150 feet wide. The other buildings were small.

The safe has been opened and the contents including $6,000 in cash and Levy's cornet, found in good condition. The cornet was somewhat discolored, but it is not thought the tone has been injured. At a meeting this evening of the Directors it was decided not to rebuild. There is a strong feeling among business men, however, in favor of rebuilding with iron. Several have already offered to contribute liberally.

A FEARFUL TRAGEDY.

A Maniac Mother Slaughters Her Five Children and Ends Her Own Life with a Butcher-Knife.

LAREDO, TEX., Oct. 3.

Details of a horrible tragedy at Lampasas, Mex., an important town on the Mexican National Railway, have just been received here. The information comes from a Texan who had been prospecting in Mexico, and who learned the particulars from an eye-witness of the butchery, and who afterward assisted in burying the bodies.

Mr. Rollins said that on one of the large ranches about twenty miles to southward of Lampasas there lived for years past a quiet, well-to-do Mexican named Antonio Valdez, whose family consisted of a wife and five children, the eldest of the children being aged ten years, the youngest two. The wife, about thirty years of age, had been subject to epileptic fits and spells of melancholy of long duration. In the past few months she had exhibited many marks of temporary insanity, and when in such mental aberration invariably sought to do violence to her little ones. On Wednesday the afflicted woman was attacked with one of these fits of unusual severity. When she had recovered from the spasm her husband went to work to herd a flock of sheep belonging on the ranch. He had been gone but a short while when his wife arose from her couch, and taking a butcher-knife, which had been carelessly left within reach, at once began the work of destruction. Her oldest child was the first to fall beneath the wild mother's heavy blows, the victim's head being almost severed from the body. In quick succession she slew the other children, hacking and stabbing them in the most barbarous and sickening manner. There they lay scattered over the room, five bleeding and mangled corpses. The frantic mother seemed to view them with grim satisfaction, filling the air with wild and weird exclamations. Suddenly taking a parting look at the dead before her, she plunged the knife into her own heart, reeled to a corner in the room and fell dead. During all the time this fearful tragedy was being enacted eye-witnesses were powerless to prevent it. The husband was soon apprised, and returning to the house he found his wife and children weltering in their gore. The lamentations of the poor man were pitiable in the extreme. He could not be consoled. In due time neighbors came and arrangements were made to bury the dead. Six graves were dug. The next morning the parish priest arrived, and the sad funeral rites were performed. Six fresh mounds now mark the spot where lie buried all that Antonio Valdez loved on earth.

A Black Tragedy.

COLUMBIA, S. C., Oct. 3.

Last Saturday night a murder was committed in York County in which the victim and his slayer were both negroes. About eight p. m. Tate Massey stepped to the door to empty a basin of water. While standing in the door a gun was fired and the contents lodged in Massey's thigh, severing an artery, and he soon after died from loss of blood. The murderer, Fred Springs, was arrested on Sunday and committed to jail. Springs does not deny the shooting, though he claims that he did not fire with the intention to kill, but only to wound his victim. The difficulty was brought on by the intimacy of Massey with the wife of Springs.